

ISO 14001 OVERVIEW

The ISO 14001 standard is an environmental management system standard not an environmental performance standard. The standard is designed to establish a management system that evaluates and addresses how the organization interacts with the environment. The standard can be broken down into four distinct sections: plan, implement, check and act. Every section of the standard contains the word "shall". That simply means that each section of the standard must be addressed in a manner that satisfies the intent of that section. The most commonly utilized verbs in the standard are "establish" and "maintain". These verbs are normally associated with the noun "procedure". They are normally combined in the following manner "establish and maintain a procedure". What is different with respect to ISO 14001 and ISO 9001 is that the term "documented procedure" is excluded from the majority of the ISO 14001 requirements. Your organization should carefully evaluate the need for additional "documented procedures" to support the environmental management system for those sections where it is not required by the standard. The presence of additional "documented procedures" might provide the basis for more precise and accurate operation and internal and third party audits.

SECTION OVERVIEW

- A. General Requirements (4.1)
 - There must be a documented system that meets all the requirements contained in the standard.
- B. Environmental Policy (4.2)
 - Relevant to the organization's activities.
 - Comply with legislation.
 - Commits to prevention of pollution.
 - Commits to continual improvement.
 - Commits to setting environmental objectives and targets.
 - Available to all employees and the public.

PLAN

- C. Environmental Aspects (4.3.1)
 - Identified for normal operating conditions, foreseeable deviations and emergencies.
- D. Legal and Other Requirements (4.3.2)
 - Relevant legislation, regulatory and other environmental targets must be available.
- E. Objectives and Targets (4.3.3) [*Documented*]
 - Environmental objective and targets must be established that are consistent with the environmental policy.
- F. Environmental Management Program (4.3.4)
 - Programs for the achievement of objectives and targets must be established, and responsibilities must be designated.

IMPLEMENT

- G. Structure and Responsibility (4.4.1) [*Documented*]
 - Adequate human resources and appropriate skills must be provided.
 - A management representative must be assigned to insure that the EMS is implemented and to report performance to management.
- H. Training, Awareness and Competence (4.4.2)
 - Employees must be aware of environmental objectives.
 - Employees with responsibility in the area of the environmental objectives must have appropriate training and understand the consequences of the functions.
- I. Communication (4.4.3)
 - A system must be in place for receiving and responding to communications regarding environmental aspects from both internal and external sources.
- J. Environmental Management System and Documentation (4.4.4) [*Documented*]
 - There must be a documented description of the environmental management system that relates the policy, objectives and targets, and responsibilities.
 - It must describe how to access any other associated documentation (i.e. procedures, lists and/or records).
- K. Document Control (4.4.5)
 - There must be a document control system.
- L. Operational Control (4.4.6) [*Documented*]
 - Documented procedures must be prepared when they are needed to insure conformance with the requirements of environmental management system.
 - Suppliers and contractors should be informed of the procedures.
- M. Emergency Preparedness and Response (4.4.7)
 - Foreseeable emergency situations must be identified and appropriate procedure(s) prepared for implementation.
 - The procedure(s) must be tested periodically.

CHECK

- N. Monitoring and Measurement (4.5.1) [*Documented*]
 - There must be documented procedures for monitoring activities that impact on the environment.
 - Monitoring equipment must be calibrated.
 - There must be a procedure for evaluating compliance with relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
- O. Nonconformance and Corrective and Preventative Action (4.5.2)
 - There must be a process in place for handling nonconformance(s) based upon investigation and subsequent corrective action.
- P. Environmental Management Records (4.5.3)
 - Record retention and archiving must be specified.
- Q. Environmental Management System Audit (4.5.4)

- The environmental management system must be audited to insure that it is operating as designed.
- The results of the audit must be reported to management.
- Nonconformance(s) must be addressed.

ACT

R. Management Review (4.6)

- Management must review the environmental management system, with special emphasis on the policy and the objectives, to ensure that environmental management system is still effective to the organization's activities.
- If the conditions under which the previous environmental aspects were evaluated have changed, the policy and objective(s) and target(s) may need to be reevaluated and modified.